

**CANADIAN RESOURCE
CENTRE FOR VICTIMS
OF CRIME**



**CENTRE CANADIEN DE
RESSOURCES POUR LES
VICTIMES DE CRIMES**

"Dedicated to Justice" • «Au service de la justice»

September 2, 2008

The Honourable Deb Matthews
Minister of Children and Youth Services
14th Flr, 56 Wellesley St W
Toronto, ON
M5S 2S3

Dear Minister,

The Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime is a national, non-government agency dedicated to providing a voice for victims and survivors of violent crime in Canada. We are writing to you concerning the tragic murder of Katelynn Sampson in August of this year by a woman who was permitted to be this young child's guardian despite her criminal record for prostitution, drugs and violence.

It is clear that improvements are needed to the child protection system in Ontario. We believe there is a serious problem with a system that allows one parent to surrender custody of their child through a simple process in a family law court, which does not require an investigation to ensure the new guardian will provide a safe, healthy and caring environment.

We strongly believe that child protection agencies must be involved in all child custody matters in Ontario. Such agencies could then conduct background checks, home visits and provide ongoing support to ensure that children are protected from harm.

What happened to Katelynn is especially horrific because it could have been prevented. Change is needed to ensure that this sort of systemic failure never occurs again in Ontario.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heidi Illingworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Heidi Illingworth
Executive Director